

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 06653 01 OF 02 021135Z

11

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

----- 091261

P 020944Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5811

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 6653

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY AND ATHERTON FROM PICKERING

E.O. 11652 XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR JO US XF

SUBJECT: SHEEHAN INTERVIEW WITH RIFAI AND KING HUSSEIN

REF: AMMAN 6621

1. AS NOTED REFTTEL, I WILL REPORT ONLY A FEW OF THE MORE SALIENT ITEMS FROM ED SHEEHAN'S LONHCONVERSATIONS WITH KING AND RIFAI. THE FOLLOWING STRIKE ME AS THE MOST INTERESTING, THE MAJOR THEMES HAVE BEEN HEARD BEFORE BUT WILL ATTEMPT TO AVOID EXCESSIVE DUPLICATIONS OF PAST REPORTING.

2. RIFAI: HE SAID THAT THE US MUST BEGIN THE PROCESS OF LIMITING ITS COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL. WE SHOULD HAVE ANNOUNCED A POSITION OF SUPPORT FOR RETURN TO THE 1967 BORDERS WITH ALL OF THE IRON CLAD QUARANTEES WHICH THE ISRAELIS WANT. ONLY THEN WILL THE ISRAELIS REALIZE THAT THE US COMMITMENT IS NOT ABSOLUTELY OPEN ENDED. THE US HAS NO WAY OF EXERTING REAL PRESSURE ON ISRAEL AS LONG AS THE COMMITMENT IS OPEN ENDED. THE PRESENCE OF THE US TECHNICIANS ON EGYPTIAN TERRITORY WILL KEEP EGYPT FROM LIBERATING ITS OWN TERRITORY.

3. RIFAI CONTINUED THAT JORDAN IS VERY GRATEFUL PERSONALLY TO SECRETARY KISSINGER FOR ALL OF HIS PAST WORK IN MAINTAINING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF JORDAN. HOWEVER

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 06653 01 OF 02 021135Z

RIFAI'S STATEMENTS WERE STAMPED WITH AN ELEMENT OF BITTER-

NESS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES FAILURE TO DO ANYTNG IN THE SUMMER OF 1974 FOR JORDAN IN TERMS OF A WEST BANK DIS-ENGAGEMENT. NOW THERE IS A LACK OF CONFIDENCE THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING FURTHER.THERE IS SOME SUSPICION THAT THE TECHNIQUE FOLLOWED IN VIETNAM WITH THE PEACE ACCORD WHERE THE UNITED STATES ATTEMPTED TO TRANQUILIZE THE AREA, ONLY TO HAVE IT ERUPT LATER WITH DISASTEROUS CONSEQUENCES, WILL BE REPEATED IN THE MIDDLE EAST

4. KING HUSSEIN SPOKE OF HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE NEW HANDICAPS UNDER WHICH THE SECRETARY OPERATES IN THE AREA OF MIDDLE EAST POLICY. HE IDENTIFIED NOT UNEXPECTEDLY THE ZIONISTS LOBBY AND CHANGING PERSPECTIVES IN THE US CONGRESS. HE COMPARED TODAY WITH 1956 WHEN PRESIDENT EISENHOWER FORCED THE ISRAELIS, THE BRITISH AND THE FRENCH TO WITHDRAW FROM THE SINAI AND THE CANAL ZONE RESPECTIVELY.

5. THE KING REPEATED THE THEME THAT JORDAN WAS CONFIDENT AFTER THE 1973 WAR OF HAVING A DISENGAGEMENT OF ITS OWN. JORDAN REALLY THOUGHT THE US WOULD WORK SOMETHING OUT FOR IT BUTSADAT INTERVENED AND ABSOLVED JORDAN OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WEST BANK. JORDAN WAS DEEPLY DISAPOINTED THAT THE US AND SECRETARY KISSINGER DID NOT PRESS IN THE SUMMER OF 1974 FOR WEST BANK WITHDRAWAL. THE REASONS WERE PROBABLY ISRAELI PRESSURE, ARAB PRESSURE (EGYPT) AND THE LACK OF US CONVICTION.

6. WITH THE HAWK DEAL, JORDAN WAS HUMILIATED SADDENED AND CONCERNED ABOUT THE IMPACT OF ITS RELATIONS.

IT WAS A TIME OF GREAT DISALLUSIONMENT FOR ME PERSONALLY SAID THE KING. WHAT DISTURBS ME MOST HE SAID WAS THE DOUBLE STANDARD EMPLOYED IN THE CONGRESS. ON CYPRUS IS A CRISIS NOT OF TURKEY'S MAKING TURKEY WAS DENIED ARMS BECAUSE IT INVADDED THE TERRITORY. ISREAL OCCUPIES MUCH ARAB TERRITORY AS A RESULT OF ITS ACTION IN 1967, AND THE US EXERCISES NO RESTRICTIONS, BUT INDEED APPEARS TO BE LOADING THE ISRAELIS DOWN WITH NEW WEAPONS AND LARGE SUMS OF MONEY. THE KING REFERRED TO THIS WEEK'S NEWSWEEK ARTICLE AND SAID THAT EVEN IF PERSHING'S ARE NEVER DELIVERED

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 AMMAN 06653 01 OF 02 021135Z

IF ALL THE WEAPONS DESCRIBED IN THAT ARTICLE ARE PROVIDED TO THE ISRAELIS, THERE WILL NEVER BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTAIN A BALANCE OF POWER IN THE MIDDLE EAST HE DESCRIBED THE IDEA OF BALANCE A POWER AS SOMETHING WHICH HAS NEVER EXISTED IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 06653 02 OF 02 022045Z

64

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

----- 100221

P 020944Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5810

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 6653

NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY AND ATHERTON FROM PICKERING

ISREAL HAS ALWASYS BEEN IN A FAVORED POSITION.

7. WHEN ASKED ABOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR ISRAEL THE KING SAID HE BELIEVED ISREAL HAS NUCLEAR CAPABILITY BUT DID NOT HOW MANY WEAPONS THE ISREALIS MIGHT HAVE. HE SAID HE FELT THE ISRAELIS HAD THE ABILITY AND CAPACITY TO PRODUCE AT LEAST SEVERAL NUCLEAR WARHEADS EVERY YEAR AND HAVE HAD THAT ABILITY FOR A LONG TIME. HE DESCRIBED THE WARHEADS AS APPROXIMATELY THE SAME YIELD AS THE HIROSHIMA WEAPONS. HE SAID THIS WAS INFORMATION DERIVED FROM HIS OWN INTELLIGENCE AND FROM EXTENSIVE TALKS WHICH HE HAS HAD WITH LEADERS AND EXPORTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WHEN ASKED IF THE ISREALIS WOULD USE ATOMIC WEAPONS, HE SAID HE FELT THAT THEIR MASADA COMPLEX UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS THEY WOULD. HE ADDED THAT WHETHER THEY USE THEM OR NOT THEIR POSSESSION OF THESE WEAPONS MEANS PACE IS FAR FROM THEIR THOUGHTS AND THAT THE ARABS MUST DO ALL THEY CAN POSSIBLE CAN TO ACQUIRE SIMILIAR WEAPONS. HE POINTED OUT THE ISREALIS HAVE NOT SIGNED THE NPT.

8. WHEN ASKED ABOUT A NEW AGMS RECE IN THE MIDDLE EAST HE SAID YET THERE IS EVERY POSSIBILITY OF ONE, IT COULD HAVE A GREATER EFFECT ON THE AREA THAN THE SINAI ACCORD

9. WHEN DISCUSSING THE FUTURE THE KING SAID HE HAD

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 06653 02 OF 02 022045Z

ALWASY BEEN IN THE PAST AN OPTIMIST ABOUT PEACE BUT WAS NOW A PESSIMISTS. HE SAID HE DIDNOT KNOW WHEN THE NEXT WAR MIGHT TAKE PLACE. ISREAL HAS ALL THE CARDS TO DELAY AND BLOCK THE NEXT STEP. THE POINT OF NO RETURN WILL BE WHEN THEARAB WORLD LOSES HOPE THAT PEACE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED ON THE BASIS OF UNSC RESOLUTION 242 AND 338. THAT PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT HE SAIS IS NOT FAR AWAY AS SOME REALIZE UNLESS SOMEHOW MOMENTUM FOR PEACE CAN BE GAINED AND FIRMLY ESTABLISHED.

9. IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER PRESIDENT NIXON HAD GIVEN HIM ASSURANCES THAT US POLICY WAS TO RETURN TO THE 1967 BORDERS HE WAS LESS CATEGORICAL THAN ASAD OR RIFAI. HE SAID THE POINT HAD NOT BEEN MADE IN SO MANY WORLDS, BUT THIS CONTINUED TO BE THE JORDANIANS INTERPRETATION OF RESOLUTION 242 AS IT WAS AND HAS BEEN DESCRIBED TO THEM BY THE UNITED STATES. HE REMAKED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD NOT SAID THIS TO HIM AND THUS COULD NOT QUOTE THE SECRETARY ON THIS POINT.

10. AT ONE POINT WHEN SHEEHAN ASKED ABOUT CONTACTS BETWEEN THE US AND PLO, THE KING WENT OFF THE RECORD AND SAID THAT HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THERE HAD BEEN SOME SORT OF DIALOGUE. SHEEHAN PRESSED AND KING REFUSED TO SAY ANTHING MORE THAN IT WAS HIS "IMPRESSION".

11. AT THE END THE KING SAID THAT HIS WORST FEARS ARE BASED ON WHAT HE PERCEIVES IS THE NECESSITY FOR THE UNITED STATES TO GO SLOW NOW. HE TOLD SHEEHAN THAT HIS GREAT HOPE WAS THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE ELECTED AND THAT TOGETHER THE SECRETARY AND THE PRESIDENT COULD MOVE RAPIDLY FOLLOWING ELECTIONS TOWARD PEACE IN THE AREA. HE CHARACTERIZED THE LAPSE OF TIME AS BEING DANGEROUS AND AFFIRMED THAT IT IS HIS VIEW ISREAL HAS NOT REAL INTENTION OF GIVING UP ON THE WEST BANK.

12. BOTH RIFAI AND KING INSISTED THAT NONE OF THE MATERIAL THEY GAVE SHEEHAN CAN BE USED BEFORE WINTER THIS YEAR.
PICKERING

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, FOREIGN RELATIONS, CAT-C, CHEROKEE 10/02/75, PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, BALANCE OF POWER
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975AMMAN06653
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P860032-1713, N750005-0033
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751092/aaaaddtx.tel
Line Count: 210
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 75 AMMAN 6621
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 APR 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <28 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHEEHAN INTERVIEW WITH RIFAI AND KING HUSSEIN
TAGS: PFOR, PEPR, MASS, JO, US, XF, IS, (HUSSEIN I), (SHEEHAN, ED), (RIFAI, ZAYD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006